



Bizarre Terrors

Author : 黑色火种

Genre: Asian horror, Ghosts

Synopsis :

A mysterious murder occurs one night in an appartement. Li , a reporter, sensed it . However her brother An, a horror novelist, objects to her getting involved in this due to their past.

The day after , Li senses another killing happening, and while trying to stop it, she meets Jin ,someone like her .

Now the three of them, including An try to understand what is exactly going on ...

Notes :

You have to pay attention to some details.

Info :

<http://www.novelupdates.com/series/bizarre-terrors/>

Raws :

<http://www.uukanshu.com/b/20488/>

Translator :

<http://www.novelupdates.com/group/a0132/>



Bizarre Terrors Vol 1 Complete

Chapter 1

Inside a dark room.

As he opens his eyes, he thinks he is still in the dream. This place...

His eyes finally adjust to the darkness. This is a living room, but why is he here? Isn't he supposed to be sleeping in his bedroom?

He senses something strange. Like something is staring at him from above. A feeling so realistic, as if he can hear the sound of its breathing from above.

Something's up there and it's close.

But he's too scared to lift his head. This is absurd. If it's someone from behind, it may be his parents, but above... how can there be someone above?

He wants to say something, any noise will help alleviate the fear. Yet somehow he can't utter a word, as if something's stuck in his throat.

Then he feels an urge to piss. he wants to go to the toilet, but he can't move his body. The urge is getting stronger.

That thing above, if it's a real thing, what's it doing? Looking at me? The

fear grows stronger as his heart beats faster.

His eyes has totally adjusted to the darkness. He can see the whole room. But what he sees gives him goosebumps all over his body. At the same time he feels a warm sensation below.

How can this be...no, this is a dream! His pupils enlarge and he opens his mouth wide. But there is no sound. As if he is being manipulated like a doll. No, maybe he did become a doll.

He can't understand. This is too real, and too horrifying. He realizes...

Ah. No, this should just be a dream.

He closes his eyes.

Wake up! Wake up from this nightmare! So he prays. But then he senses that thing is coming over to him. No, this is impossible!

If he opens his eyes, he will know if there's anyone in front of him, or perhaps any thing. And if there isn't anything, then it is a misperception. Perhaps if he opens his eyes, he is still sleeping in that warm bed.

But... what if it's real?

That feeling is getting stronger. That thing almost touching his face. No, impossible...

Is it breathing on his face? No, it's likely wind. He didn't make sure the window was closed.

Calm down. Stay cool. The he feels a drop of sweat slides from his forehead to his nose, and then another. his body is feeling abnormally cold. Right, body...

When he looked at his body before...

Impossible, it's not real.

He just has lift his eyelids a bit to open those eyes. But he's struggling on this decision.

Yes, it can't be real. It is definitely a mistake. he repeatedly recalls what he saw. Everything's becoming blurry in his mind. No matter how you think, it should be an illusion.

Confidence starts to build up, but the feeling of something looking at him is still there.

He opens his eyelids just slightly. There's only darkness.

It's too much of a torture to open his eyes bit by bit. He finally makes the decision.

Then at that moment, he opens his eyelids all the way.

In front of him...

Li knew something horrible must have happened.

She has that ability since seven years ago. Every time she gets this feeling, something horrible happens.

Since she moved to this city three years ago, this ability to sense horror has decreased.

"Something must have happened yesterday." She looks through the papers on her hand and focused on a news.

This news arrived in her news agency this morning. Though she is not the reporter, so she can only analyze it through the interviews and photos.

It is about a murder in an apartment. The police is withholding information from the media. All they know is the victim is a high schooler, name Xie Xiaohao. According to interviews with the neighbors, they heard screams and cries from the Xie's apartment, and worried about something bad happened, so they called the police. After the police barged into the apartment, their reactions were strange. Within ten minutes, many police vehicles arrived, along with over ten medical examiners. The neighbors were curious, but the police formed a wall to block them from seeing anything inside. Even reporters were blocked from entering.

A truck was used to transport the corpse. It left with four police vehicles guarding at all sides. It's only the death of a high schooler, what's all the big actions for? Li knows there's definitely something wrong. This case invoked the attention of the media. It has been six hours since the event, and it's starting to appear on the internet.

Li recently got a raise, so she's treating her coworkers to lunch this day.

"I have a feeling it's something big." Zhao, the reporter of this case, said. "When I arrived there, a few police were guarding the entrance. I showed them my id and said I'm going in for interview. But he still wouldn't let me in. Then I saw a truck drove in there along with four police cars. I had to wait until the police left before I could go in. The victim's parents apparently gone insane after they found the body. An ambulance carried them away. The residents of the apartment are all in a panic."

The food is tasteless to Li right now. She sensed it, but she couldn't prevent anything.

Since a week ago, she sensed that in one week, in some place, someone will encounter something horrible. This feeling grew more intense with every passing day. Then last night she woke up from her dream and could vividly sensed it happened.

Then this morning, that feeling came back again. Tomorrow at night, another person will encounter the same fate.

"Zhao..." She has made the decision. "Are you going to follow this

case?"

"Yes, the boss values this case, and orders me to investigate. And get something unique before the other agencies."

"Then can you let me do the interviews? I will give you the reports and you can even release them with your name. I can talk to the boss about this..."

The others are laughing. "Our role model is at it again."

"That's why she got a raise."

"Stop making fun of me..." Li is not in the mood to joke around, all she can think about are the interviews. If she can't find out in time, she can't prevent the tragedy happening tomorrow.

"Ok, stop with the tense face, Li." Zhao patted her shoulder. "I will go talk to the boss and give you this case. Of course it will be on your name."

"Thank you. Zhao."

"Hey, Li, look. Isn't that the new book by your brother?"

She looks at a table nearby, a couple is having their meal. There's a book on the table, called, , with the author's name Yi YunAn (An).

"Ah, Li. Why didn't you tell us your brother's new book is out. We would've went to buy one."

She smiled awkwardly, and think to herself. 'That's for your own good. My brother's books are not for normal people.'

She has been getting increasingly suspicious of the existence of ghost these years.

Her brother is a horror novel author. His books are best sellers within the country and even in HongKong and Taiwan. A company made one of his books into a movie.

Back home at night. She can smell the deliciousness as she walks in the door. Her brother has always been good at cooking. As she walks into the kitchen, he's stir frying a dish.

He turns his head around and sees Li. "You're back. Go wash your hands."

Since their parents died seven years ago, they have been supporting each other.

During dinner.

"You took on a new case?"

"Yeah." Li is still excited. "I have only been able to report some weird looking animals or other small stuff these three years. But this time is different."

"Is this related to your premonitions?"

"Yes. You..."

An looked at Li with a serious face. "I don't want to lose you. We moved here because we want to get away from the past."

Li is silent, she puts down her fork, her voice shaking. "Have you forgotten? When dad and mom died..."

"Enough... That's the past. I want to start a new life with you."

"But you are also thinking over the same thing, aren't you? I don't want to keep running. Why can't we face our fate?"

"Listen, you better not follow this case."

Li said with dissatisfaction. "This same line! Every time I sense something, you tell me not to think about it. But in reality, people keep dying. And the police can't find anything. At least I won't to stop it. I don't want to see other people die... Just like dad and mom..."

"Stop mentioning seven years ago."

"Why? Why are you always running? Just like back then, you rushed through the funeral and got me out of the city. Then we moved around several times before finally settling here. You want me to forget the past, but I just can't do it..."

An sighed and said softly. "I beg you, ok? Li, we have a new life here. The past has nothing to do with us. If you continue to follow these things, I am afraid..."

"I don't want to run! I don't want to live in this fake comfort."

She doesn't know anything. She doesn't know the horror and despair of all this.

Chapter 2

The next day, Li arrives at the police station. Even though she has communicated with the chief investigator for quite a while, he still won't disclose any information on the death of Xie Hao.

"We can only disclose of the fact that he was murdered. Since the method used is rather cruel, we will not disclose the cause of death. This case is currently under investigation. We will hold a news conference when we have new information. That's all I can tell you, Ms. Yi."

"But... according to our understanding, Xie Hao's parents had gone insane after seeing their son's body. They're still under therapy in an institution. The police kept this from public intentionally. Furthermore, the neighbors told us when the police arrived that day, they were accompanied by multiple medical examiners..."

"Enough, Ms. Yi." The chief's face is looking blue. He makes the gesture to leave. "The police has our positions. The government is also taking this seriously. We will publish the results when the proper time comes. Please go back."

Li knows there's no use continuing. The chief won't tell her anything else. She's certain that there's an astonishing inside story. The current situation is just like seven years ago when her parents died.

No matter what her brother said, she's determined to find out the truth.

Outside the chief investigator's room, she is thinking of what to do next. Who should I ask? The whole department is probably ordered to keep it from the media, and the victim's parents won't be able to speak consciously.

Well, maybe I can still get something from crazy talks.

Once decided, she puts her notebook back into the bag then rushes to the parking lot. She has not noticed a long hair woman in black clothes staring at her back.

Li hopes to get some leads the night. She doesn't want to report another murder tomorrow.

On the way to the psych institution, she turns on the radio. "Hello, we invited the famous horror novel writer Yi YunAn as our guest today. This is the fourth time he's come on our show. Hello, Mr. Yi. Congratulations on your new book. This book has been a bestseller. We will open up the hotline, will you please answer some questions from the readers?"

"Yes, I am also excited at this opportunity to speak with the readers. I am very happy to be a guest again."

"But before that, I have a question for you. Is this book the same as always, a supernatural horror fiction?"

"Yep. I have mentioned that I only write this genre of novels. To let the readers feel that terrors that always exist beside everyone."

Li is thinking if she should also make a call to the show, then she heard this.

"Terrors always exist beside everyone."

Since her parents died seven years ago, and the two moved out of the city. That scene was carved into their memories. They can't forget, yet they're too afraid to hate.

She's tired of her life like this. She doesn't want to be like her brother, always running away from those things. Li knows running is useless. Those things are everywhere.

The hotline opens up.

"Mr. Yi, are your stories based on reality?"

"Mr. Yi, I read your new book. I finished it through an all-nighter. It was too scary. Did you experience anything depressing in real life?"

Li listens as her brother answers the readers' questions. The psych institution is close.

"Mr. Yi, I read all your books. You're amazing at setting the mood and depicting the characters. As if you have experienced it."

This is a woman, but her voice feels cold, like she's interrogating.

"You're funny miss. If I experienced it, how can I still be alive?" His voice is calm.

"Do you think those things from your book exist in the real world?"

"I'm just writing a fiction. Never thought about connecting it with the real world."

The car arrives at the entrance, but Li keep on listening to the radio.

"Is that so. I understand. Bye then." She hangs up.

Weird person. Li drives to the parking lot then takes the elevator upstairs.

The nurse won't let her visit the patients. But after she repeatedly stressed that a life is on the line with sincerity, she allowed Li ten minutes.

She follows the nurse upstairs to the floor Xie Hao's parents are at. The moment she steps out of the elevator. "XieHao! XieHao! How did you become of this! Ahhh..."

A bunch of doctors and nurses are restraining a middle aged woman in bed. One doctor is trying to inject sedative to her.

"She's one of the patient you are looking for. Even since she came here, she's been like this. I don't think you can get anything out of her. The other patient's situation is worse."

"XieHao... How did you become so terrifying? Who made you like that..."

Li walks into the room. A nurse said. "You better not provoke her."

What a tragedy. After the son died, the parents gone insane. This definitely isn't a normal murder case. Even if the scene was bloody, the victim was dissected, it wouldn't cause them to gone mad.

What... exactly did they see?

She didn't get anything out of them. Back on the parking lot, she looks at her watch, getting anxious as time passes. There's no lead right now but that feeling is getting stronger. Can't I stop it?

"Do you want to know the answer?"

A voice comes from behind.

She turns around and sees a woman with shoulder length hair. She looks so cold.

"Who are you?"

"Ms. Yi. Can you let me see your brother?"

Ten minutes later, they are sitting across each other in a cafe outside

the psych institution.

"Who are you? Do you know my brother?"

"Even though I don't know him, I understand your pasts." She looks calm.

"My name is Ren Jin. I've been looking for you two for a long time."

"What? Are you a cop? Investigating the case that happened seven years ago?"

"No. I'm not related to the police. I am looking for you according to my father's memo in his notebook. He went missing three years ago. Your brother was recorded in the notebook in details. And the case seven years ago also."

"Who is your father?"

"Ren Shenbo. A psychiatrist. But he's also a researcher in supernatural occurrences. My mother died in a strange car accident three years ago."

"But... we don't seem to know your father. My parents never mentioned any psychiatrist when they were alive."

"Anyway, I will let you know the details when I see your brother. You're investigating yesterday's case right? I can give you some leads. I hacked into the police's network last night and downloaded the data. I can give

them to you and in exchange you have to let me see your brother."

"Are you a hacker? Who are you, why do you want to see my brother."

"I can't tell you this right now."

Li looks at her watch again. There's no time. A life is on the line. Comply with her now then think about things later.

"I'll accept it. But you have to let me see the data first. If I happen to use your data on the news, I will say it's sent to us anonymously."

"Of course."

She pulls out a large envelope from her jacket and hands it to Li. "There are fourteen photos of the body. I printed the photos right after downloading them. There is no editing. There's also the death report by medical examiners."

Li opens the envelope then took out the photos. Her heart skipped a beat, her pupils enlarged, and she couldn't stop her hand from shaking.

"You..." Li couldn't say anything. The same as seven years ago. Unexplainable phenomenon. Then she continues looking through the photos. Her breathing gets heavier as she goes. She almost faints when she gets to the fifth.

Li can't continue with it and put the photos back, then takes out the

death report.

"Do you believe it?"

Jin asked calmly.

"Yes. Yes. I believe because it's just like this." Li's voice is shaking. "This unexplainable phenomenon. It made us run away to this city. Even after we ran so far, we still can't escape it."

Jin is studying Li's face. She's certain that this is the person she has been looking for.

"You have a premonition ability right?"

Li suddenly raises her head and stares at her.

"You can sense how long it will take for the next horrible event to happen right? I have a similar ability. I got this ability after my mother died. She was killed by a ghost."

She looks so sad as she says this. But this sadness quickly disappears. But Li can feel that there's fear within her. A kind of fear that prevents her from even thinking about it.

"Why do you want to see my brother?"

"If I tell you, some day in the future I will be killed by a ghost, no, perhaps something even greater than ghosts. Will you believe me? And I can't escape it no matter where I go. This was what my father told me. He is an all knowing psychic."

Li wouldn't believe this seven years ago. But she can't not believe it now. Her perspective of the world has been changing these years. She has to believe that there are ghosts and curses in this world.

She's still so calm even when she talks about getting killed. But Li can see her hands shaking slightly.

"I believe, Ms. Ren. How did you know about my ability? And why my brother?"

"Not only your brother but also you. I will tell you both the details when I see him."

Then Li remembered her premonition for tonight. "You said you can sense it, do you know what's going to happen tonight? No, where is it and who?"

"What I know is limited, but your brother should know more about it. He probably has the same ability. Since it's happening tonight, then let's go see him right now, if you want to prevent a second victim."

Chapter 3

An is staying home alone. Looking at the sky through the window, the air is gray and foggy.

Tonight... that person will die.

An knows about this. But why prevent it? What can this change? He only wishes to live peacefully with his sister. He's been in this city for three years and haven't made any friends. He knows that perhaps one day he will move somewhere else. He cut any connection with relatives and his past. All he has left is his name and those memory.

Foot steps coming through the door. He turns around and see the door opens. Li comes in with a stranger.

She quickly closes the door. "An... Do you have the same premonition ability? Tell me."

"What happend? I am totally lost."

Li looks outside the window. The sun is still there. She organizes her thoughts then tells him everything.

An gives Jin with a cold stare. He gestures her to leave. "Ms. Ren, I don't wish anyone to interrupt our peaceful life. We don't have anything to do with you and we don't have the obligation to help you. Please leave and

don't come to us again."

"An, listen. I want to know the reason. We've been running away from that thing all these years, we didn't even go to our parents funeral. My life is full of darkness, how can you say that as peaceful? I want to know how dad and mom died."

Then Jin added.

"My father knows a lot. He told me one thing, and that thing can fulfill your deepest wish. Mr. Yi. Do you still want to me to leave?"

An is startled. He stares at Jin for a whole minute. "You know my wish?"

"Yes. There's nothing my father doesn't know. If you are suspicious, I can prove it tonight."

An's thoughts are racing. The terror of that day appears in his mind. As he is hesitating, he heard a seductive voice.

"Tell me, what is the name of the second person?"

He opens his mouth subconsciously.

"Zhang Jun."

Jun is a college student that likes to party. He lives far away from the campus and walks to school.

Tonight, his friend's girlfriend is holding a birthday party.

Everyone is partying like crazy, playing poker, singing karaoke. Then people start to leave at 10pm.

"Isn't it curfew hour already for your dorms?"

"So what? We can climb in through the windows. Do you think the management really cares?"

Jun laughs. "That ponytail from biology department looks good. I may go date her, you guys want to bet a meal?"

"Why not."

After saying goodbye to his friends, Jun takes the bus and gets off near his apartment. He's taking the shortcut. At the same time, he feels an urge to use the toilet. Probably drank too much beer. He remembers a public toilet just in front.

After doing business, he comes to the door and finds that it won't open.

"What's wrong?" He pushes it. Is it broken?

The lights suddenly go off. The toilet is in a complete darkness. He usually likes to joke around about supernatural stuff. But this place is making him nervous.

He shouts. "Is anyone outside? I am locked inside here!"

No replies. He's regretting he took the shortcut. People don't usually go pass this place.

Why didn't I just hold it till I got home.

He kicks at the door. Then tackles it. But it just won't open. Let's see if there are any tools that can pry open the door. Otherwise I will have to spend the night here. But it's so dark. I can't even tell if there's anyone in front of me. He tries to search in the dark slowly.

"Found it. A chemistry first year in the city college." Li is a reporter and has her sources of information.

An has the premonition ability, but different from Li's. He can form an image of the person that's going to die and see his name. He obtained this ability soon after his parents' death, just like Li. He saw Zhang Jun's face and the iconic statue of that college.

It was 10pm when they found his information from the school. Li used

interview as an excuse to get the teachers to give her Jun's contact info. They even gave her the contacts of a few of his friends.

When she got in touch with his friends, they said he went to a birthday party with them then went home taking the bus. He's probably home already.

"We have to find him immediately."

Li and the other two get on the car and rush to his apartment. An is driving while Li keeps trying to call him.

Jun receives a call in the toilet. Shit. Why didn't I think of cellphones, he curses. It's an unfamiliar number. "Hello, who's this?"

"Is this Zhang Jun? I can't explain it in brief. My name is Yi Yunli, a reporter. I would like to interview you. Are you currently home?"

"No..."

Jin snatches the phone. "Where are you? Are you in danger?"

"What... danger? I am..."

He stops. He hears something from the darkness. A heavy breathing.

Even Jin could hear that breathing over the phone.

He jumps. "Who?"

No one answers. I should be the only one here, there was no one else when I entered. There can't be anyone else here.

He hurries back to the phone. "Help... Help me! I am in the public toilet near the intersection of GF and BT road. I can't open the door no matter what. You can ask people if you can't find it."

There's that breathing again. But this time, closer.

His phone suddenly plays a melody. Then it turns off. Out of battery? God, why now? But I remember I charged it before leaving the apartment this morning.

He freezes, afraid to take even a step, afraid of running into something. It's so dark here, there isn't even a window.

"Who... who's it. Stop... stop scaring me ok?"

He is shaking. Are there really ghosts in this world?

He hears the breathing again. It's so vivid this time because... it's right beside his ear!

He screams then starts running. He has lost his sense of direction.

That door, have to find that door and break it to get out!

Then he realizes something horrifying. This toilet is not even a hundred cubic meter big, but he has been running for five minutes without reaching any wall. God, how can this be? He doesn't smoke so there's no lighter. He has no way of making any light. Perhaps it's better that he can't see.

After Jun hung up the call, An starts driving faster. His hands are full of sweat. He doesn't know who this woman is but she knows about their abilities. She said she can fulfill my wish, is that true? I have to save Zhang Jun first then ask her.

Jin keeps looking at her watch. She doesn't know when Jun will die but it's close.

Jun is soaking wet from sweat. He has been running in every directions for ten minutes but he hasn't touched anything. He's regretting ever leaving that wall. It's also strange that his eyes still hasn't adjusted to the darkness after so long. As if his eyes are blinded. He couldn't even tell if someone is in front of him.

"Help...Help! No, I don't care who you are, please don't hurt me." Jun

can't even stand right now. He's crawling on the ground. It's complete silence. He can't hear the echo of his own voice. What the heck is happening?

Then there comes the sound. He holds his breath, afraid to even move a finger. That something is not far behind him. Something crawling on the ground. It's getting closer. He's shaking, crawling away very slowly as if he makes any big movement, that thing will jump over.

An's car arrives at the road, but the shortcut is too narrow for a car to drive in. "You two stay here. I will go take a look."

It's getting closer. His hands and feet are feeling numb. His mind almost blanked out. Is it a misperception that the air is feeling thinner?

He reaches his hand out for another move. Then suddenly, he touches a freezing cold hand.

"Ahhhhhhh" Jun can't understand why that thing is in front of him. His phone falls out of his pocket, then powers on with the screen facing the front of him.

Finally a source of light

Finally found the public toilet. As An plans to tackle the door, it opens up with just a twist on the handle. It's a normal toilet with three rooms, a faucet, a mop laying on the wall, and a coiled up rubber tube on the ground.

An opens the toilet doors one by one. No one is inside.

"An!"

He turns around and sees Li and Jin. He frowns. "Didn't I tell you to wait."

"I'm sorry."

Jin is looking through the toilet, then she walks over to An. "We're too late."

"Who are you. What do you know?"

An stares at Jin. "Alright. I will tell you. Let's go back to the car."

Chapter 4

Back in the car. An drives to a nearby parking lot then turns his head around. "I hope you can give me a reasonable explanation."

Jin stares back at him and finally says. "To put it simply, I have the same premonition abilities as you two. I can foresee... the keyword of the unexplainable phenomenon that's going to happen. Which allows me to know the source of danger and avoid it. I obtained this ability shortly after my mother's death three years ago. Same as you two."

An never thought that she has the same fate as them.

"I know you have many questions. I lived in a city far from here three years ago. If that car accident didn't happen, I might be just a normal person right now. However, one night, our family of three was returning from a picnic on a highway. I suddenly saw a strange shadow outside the car window... The sky was getting dark so I couldn't see exactly what it was but my father and I were shocked to see my mother disappeared the next instant. She just disappeared without a trace when she was sitting on the passenger seat."

Li feels a chill at this point. She's quite timid to begin with and follows up with a question. "So... What happened to your mother?"

"She suddenly appeared on the next intersection on the road. Then a truck drove over her... The truck driver said he never noticed that my mother appeared on the street before the tragedy happened."

"In the days afterward, my father was drowned in grief. But he never gave up because I told him about the shadow. He started searching for that shadow like a madman. He investigated highway intersections at every city and even gave up his job. I was so scared to see him like that at the time. He also browsed through spirit related websites. Not long after, he disappeared, only leaving a notebook behind."

"The notebook recorded a lot of info he found during his investigation. Similar unexplainable phenomenon happens all over the world. Even though no one wanted to acknowledge their existence, they really do exist."

"Yes... that's what I think too." An nodded. "Go on."

"The notebook also recorded you two. My father obtained a premonition ability after that accident. He can see the unexplainable phenomenon that will happen in the future with some limitations. The notebook has some things that eventually happened. He wrote on the notebook for me to search for you two. Even though he only knew your names, he said I would know you are the ones when I get in touch with you. When I saw your name on the new movie, I knew it was you."

"But... how do you want us to help you? Find that shadow? Or find your father?"

"I have a premonition ability that appeared four months after the accident. It's different from my father's ability though. I wish to cooperate with you. My ability is limited just like yours. However, combining our premonitions, we will get a more complete prediction. You can see the

person's name and face. Your sister can tell the time... and I can see the keyword."

An asked. "So... if we accept you to cooperate, will you be able to fulfill my wish?"

"Yes... I mentioned to your sister that those things will come get my life one day. My father wishes for me to live. That's why he is certainly searching for ways to save me somewhere. He had already noted one of the methods in his notebook, prevent the premonition from happening. If we can break free of the fate, then the premonitions will not overlap with reality and I can live on. This is the only way to dispel the curse. And your wish will be fulfilled."

An falls into a silence. These seven years were difficult. The terror never left him, taking away his courage to go on.

"Let me... consider it."

Li knocks him on the head and says. "What do you have to consider? Two people are dead! I warn you, if you continue to watch without helping, you are not going to be my brother anymore."

She turns to Jin and says. "That's decided. Let's cooperate from now on. Perhaps we can even find out where your father is. I will give you a call when I get another premonition."

"Ok... Then I will take leave."

"I will take you back." An says.

"No need. There's a bus stop nearby. I don't feel comfortable sitting on a car since my mother's death."

"Well, let me walk you to the bus stop then. Li, wait here."

He gives Jin a hidden gesture and she responds. "Ok then."

The wind is blowing strong. The streets lights are dim. An finally says what he has been hiding.

"Li is too naïve. She doesn't know what she's up against."

"You don't want to get her involved?"

"You have to promise me that she's only providing the time and nothing else. You and I will take all the actions. You should know that I haven't told her that ending. Is what you said true?"

"What are you referring to?"

"The method to dispel the curse... Your father also told you about us in the note right?"

"Yes. You two... have the same fate as me. You will get killed by those things in the future."

"Please don't tell Li. I have been bearing this pain alone for the last seven years... The nightmares everyday were what made me write those horror novels. Soon after my mother's death, many names and faces appeared in my head. Among them are my sister and me. Then Li told me she's getting strange premonitions. After I read my parents' diaries, we decided to leave our city. We moved to a new city using their life insurance and cut off all ties with relatives and friends. This was what my parents told me to do in the diary."

He grabs his head and says with a painful expression. "Then I began to notice the further away from our original city, the shorter the time between our premonitions and the victim's death. We are one state away from the original city now and the time has lessened two to three weeks. We have moved three cities already! I don't want to believe it's real but the names that I saw would be on the papers. Either death from unknown reasons or disappearances. Not even one exception. Are my sister and I going to survive? This is my only wish."

They arrive at the bus stop. Jin looks at An. "I can't promise you anything now... but we are bonded by the same fate. We can only rely on each other."

No one knows the source of all this but they are all trapped. Waiting for the clock to reach the time of their deaths.

In the police station's cafeteria the next day.

Reporter Xueyan drops a sugar cube into her coffee and stares at her boyfriend, Xia Peng. "Just... once ok? Let me enter the victim's home

please?"

XiaPeng doesn't show any expression. He answers firmly with his arms crossed. "No! Xueyan, how many times has it been? I am a cop but I can't let you in crime scenes. What am I going to do about my boss? Even though I am on Xie Xiaohao's case and seen the body, but I was ordered not to say anything."

Xueyan giggled. "I told you... I don't need to see the body. Though it would be better if you can let me see it... But can you at least let me enter his apartment? You guys made this case so mysterious. Any info can be big news. My year-end bonus is dependent on you."

XiaPeng feels a headache. "A reporter came to investigate this case a while ago. She even got to the chief but she still got turned down. Xueyan, I really don't want to break any rules. If the news gets out, I will get written up. Didn't I promise we will open a press conference once there is new progress?"

"Please... that won't be exclusive news anymore. I promise this will be the last time, Ok?"

XiaPeng scratches his head and sighs. "You beat me... Fine, this is the last time... Such a headache."

Even though the chief prohibits spreading any info on the case, but it shouldn't be a problem for a reporter to interview the crime scene. The body had been transported away and no one lives there now.

There's only a banner blocking the entrance to the apartment now. No cops are guarding it. The landlord sees a cop and reporter then sighs. "Such a tragedy. A nice family ended up like this. Any no one is going to rent this apartment now..."

Xueyan and XiaPeng take the key then run to the crime scene. They cross the banner and open the door. It is fairly dim inside. The windows are facing west so there isn't much light. Xueyan frowns.

"XiaPeng, you can wait by the door. Don't have to come in with me."

"You wish. If I don't keep my eyes on you, who knows if you are going to take something. We had searched the whole place. You should just give up."

Xueyan looks over the room. There are no signs of a fight. No blood on the floor.

Let's just take a few photos first and study it after I go back.

She is standing next to a clothing rack. There's only a suit on the rack. A sleeve of the suit touches her hair. When she takes out the camera, she sees XiaPeng standing in front of her. "Only one photo."

"I know!" Xueyan curses his boyfriend for being too stubborn. Then...

She feels something grabbed her hair and pulled. She fall to the ground but... there is nothing aside from the clothing rack behind her.

"Who?" Her voice sounds terrified as she looks around.

XiaPeng asks. "What's wrong? You fell?"

"XiaPeng, who was behind me?"

"Huh? No one. I locked the door when I came in... What's wrong?"

Xueyan tries to stay calm and says. "Did... did you asked someone to prank me? So that I will stop the report? I am not afraid... Hey, say something. Stop staring at me!"

"What do you mean? I don't get it."

"Someone grabbed my hair just then. Yes! It was definitely a person!"

XiaPeng runs to her back. "That's impossible... Did your hair get stuck to the clothing rack?"

"No... I really felt a hand grabbed me. I..." She stopped.

The suit suddenly falls to the floor on its own. XiaPeng immediately picks it up and glances at the collar.

"Wah!" He throws the suit away and yells. "What... the heck's that?"

He saw a pair of eyes inside the collar!

He coughs up some courage and unbuttons the suit. There's nothing inside. This is just a regular suit.

"XiaPeng... Let's leave." Xueyan has already been walking toward the door.

"I feel the same."

At the same time, an image appears in An's mind. It's a young man in police uniform. His name is

"Xia Peng. So he's the third person?"

Chapter 5

The two of them run out of the apartment as if they are running for their lives. They even forget to return the keys as they drive off.

XiaPeng says. "I... I finally get why my supervisor emphasizes this case..."

"Don't. Stop... We didn't see anything. Nothing will happen to us..."

XiaPeng steps on the pedal all the way and keeps glancing at the rear view mirror.

At the same time, An senses XiaPeng's death in the near future. He immediately calls Li who was in the news agency and asks. "Li, I sensed the third victim. What about you? Did you get the time?"

"What? You already sensed it? But... I still haven't..."

XiaPeng is soaked in cold sweat when he finally reaches the police station. His coworkers see that paper white face of his and asks. "What happened to you? Not feeling well?"

He shakes his head. He recalls that when the station received that call and went to the apartment, it took a truck to transport the corpse back. Then the regional office ordered them to block off any information on the case. All they did was maintain order at the scene and not let anyone else

see the corpse.

It was of course a lie when he told XueYan he didn't see the corpse. To be honest, he had never seen anything more terrifying during his years as a cop... and now what he saw in the apartment... he doesn't want to get involved with this case anymore.

"What do you mean by this?" The superintendent frowns as he stares at the request form to be swapped to another team. The regional office only gave them a month to solve this case.

All he is considering is how to send more people and add overtimes.

But XiaPeng replies. "If you don't allow me, I would rather go back to the anti-thievery squad."

"Are you trying to infuriate me? I got you promoted because I recognized your talents. And this is how you repay me? Do you know how much pressure I am taking from the higher ups? I can't even remember how many reporters I sent away these several days. Fine... Don't fucking come back!"

XiaPeng is ashamed of himself but the terror from that pair of eyes quickly devours his guilt. The eyes are still so vivid in his mind... that can't be his imagination!

His coworkers are puzzled that he's returning to the anti-thievery squad. Isn't he doing well in the crime squad?

"Are you having any difficulty here?" An older cop asks. "Or do you feel the work here is too dangerous?"

"No...no. I don't want to follow the Xie Xiaohao case anymore. You... better be careful too. That place isn't one that anyone should enter."

His words are strange but he isn't saying anything more. He packs his items in a cardboard box and leaves the office.

Sigh...Back there again...

He walks through the hall to the elevator and waits for it to come up. The door of the elevator is smooth as a mirror and reflects his face. His eyes are fixed on the number going up. Then he looks down at the box and as he raises his head again...

He sees a white figure standing next to him from the reflection on the elevator door! It's hands are slowly reaching for his neck!

"Ah---" He throws off the box and pulls his gun. Yet, there is only a wall to his left. He looks back at the elevator door and the white figure is nowhere to be seen.

XueYan took the rest of the afternoon off from work and returned to her apartment.

As soon as she steps inside, she locks both locks on the door, the window locks, and covers the windows with curtains. But it feels too dark so she turns on all the lights. She lies on the bed and tries to sleep because of how tired she is. Half an hour later, she is still awake. The room is so quiet that the only noise comes from the clock ticking.

Suddenly, a puff of wind closed the bedroom door. She jumps off the bed in shock. The lights are flickering until they all die out.

"What... what's happening? Power outage?"

She decides to go check the fuse box. But the bedroom door just won't open. There isn't a lock on this door!

This darkness is making her feel unease. The whole situation is shrouded with a layer of strangeness. She licks her lips and walks carefully toward the window to open the curtains. Under the window is a wooden box stored with winter clothes.

She's only two steps away from the box when it moved on its own.

"Wah!" She falls to the floor and immediately crawls backward.

That... It's that thing! It followed me back!

The box is moving faster and faster and... it begins moving toward her!

"No...no!" She grabs a chair and runs toward the door. She starts hitting

the door. The box is dragging faster. Only a few steps away now.

"Get away! Don't follow me... Please leave!"

She can't even find the strength to stand anymore and falls to the floor. The box opens at the same time she fainted.

"XueYan! Are you alright?" This is XiaPeng's voice.

"We... we can't stay here any longer. That thing followed us! It won't leave us! I... I should have listened to you."

That terrorized expression makes his heart clench and he asks. "Did you also..."

The doorbell suddenly rings and shocked the two of them. XiaPeng calms himself and walks over to the peephole. Outside the door is a young man and woman both of which he doesn't know. He opens the door and asks. "Who are you?"

"Sorry to bother you, officer Xia." The man said. "Our visit is abrupt but this is urgent. You are the officer that investigated the death of Xie Xiaohao, correct? We have something we must tell you."

"You are?"

"Let me introduce myself. My name is Yi RunAn. This is my... friend miss Ren Jin."

XiaPeng frowns when he heard about Xie Xiaohao. He doesn't know if he should let them in.

Jin says. "I can feel the that thing from your apartment. Did you encounter something strange recently?"

He feels like he grabbed onto the last straw and says. "Please come in. In fact, I..."

"I see."

An and Jin listened to his narration and understand this couple are the next two victims.

Li still hasn't received a premonition yet so they don't know when will he die.

"The key to dispelling the curse is to break the prophecy. If someone that is supposed to die at 12am but lives until 1am, then the cruse is broken. But I have never tried it since my premonitions don't give enough information."

"Will it go smoothly?"

"Don't know... but this is the only method."

XiaPeng and XueYan aren't looking well and don't know what to do.

Jin says. "Do you believe ghosts exist in this world?"

Their hearts skipped a beat. XueYan says. "You saw that thing too?"

"I saw a ghost before." Jin says without hesitation. "It took away my mother's life in front of me. I am not trying to scare you. Ghosts really do exist in this world."

An says apologetically. "I am sorry... but we want to say that you are in danger."

"Is there any way to save us?" XiaPeng doesn't know if these two are con artists or real. But he is scared.

An is dumbfounded by the question. How is he going to save them? He's just a mere human too. So he turns to Jin. Her answer is surprising but expected.

"Run. This is the only thing we can do."

"Isn't this a load of garbage?"

"There's nothing we can do at the moment. We don't have any supernatural abilities."

Supernatural abilities? What are those? An feels that she knows more secrets.

"What do you mean?" XueYan asks.

"I don't really understand either. My father wrote in his notebook that I have to find out by myself. But it's basically an ability that can counter ghosts to some degree. But only that. My father still hasn't found a way to kill a ghost. Listen. If you want to survive, don't stay in a confined space. Don't drive. That will only make you die faster. Don't go into anywhere dim. Stay in public areas."

"We can live if we stay in public areas?"

"I can't promise it but your chances are much higher. The most important point is... remember to stay as far away from mirrors and elevators."

"Right... that was how today..." He tells his experience and feels much more at ease.

"I'm sorry. I need to use the bathroom... You can continue." XueYan gets up but Jin also gets up and says. "Do you want me to go along? You are in danger right now. You shouldn't stay alone."

"Uh. The bathroom is just nearby. I will scream if anything happens."

Jin thinks she's right and nods. XueYan thinks to herself: Is this actually real? Today's experience was strange but are there really ghosts in this world? Or is it caused by these two con artists?

XueYan enters the bathroom to find the shower curtain shut.

She bought this white curtain just a few days ago. But she remembered it was open when she just returned today!

Somehow, she feels something is behind the curtain.

She forgets why she came into the bathroom and slowly walks toward the curtain.

She walks by the bathroom mirror and grabs a corner of the curtain.

She thinks to herself: hope I was overthinking...

Her hands are shaking then she pulls it open at once.

Nothing is behind it.

She laughs at herself for being oversensitive when her eyes glanced over the mirror and she freezes.

There are no ghosts in the mirror. Everything is exactly the same except for the closed curtain.

She wants to scream yet something is stuck in her throat. A human figure is forming on the curtain inside the mirror, like someone is walking into it. Then that thing grabs her hand in the mirror!

"No-----"

An and the others charge into the bathroom to find XueYan crying in a corner. Her hand is pointing at the mirror which is normal.

"The mirror... something's inside the mirror..." She holds onto XiaPeng and cries. "I believe what you said! We need to move! Please save us!"

Jin walks toward the mirror and studies it. "Understood. There's actually another method that I didn't say. We can try to investigate what happened to Xie Xiaohao and Zhang Jun before they died. And find the intersecting point between the two of them."

Chapter 6

"An! I got it!" Li phones An the next day when she sensed the time of death. That is tomorrow!

"Officer Xia can only live till tomorrow... We arranged to meet this afternoon. Should we tell him?" An feels a headache.

"I won't stop you. It can become a motivation if he knows his deadline." Jin is still so indifferent. The two of them are in her house.

Jin lives in a two floor mansion with a little garden. The area is nice and the furnishing are all high end brands.

"You are living alone? The house is so big."

"My grandpa left me this house. My mother is a U.S. citizen and her family was well off there. She abandoned her right for inheritance and married to my father in China. Her family all opposed because my father was just a normal psychologist."

Jin's room has at least four computers, ten clocks, and many mirrors. The bookshelf is filled with all kinds of books from history to politics.

"Your room?"

"Curious? This is to train my supernatural ability because I am not born with it. Mirrors are important items for those not gifted even though they are also dangerous to people cursed by ghosts."

She is standing in front of a mirror, touching it.

An is staring at the ten clocks. All of them are Swiss made, all the second hands are moving at the same time.

"After my mother's death and my father's disappearance, my grandfather wanted me to move to the U.S. and inherit his assets. I rejected it. He felt sorry for my mother and bought this house in my name. I accepted the house because this is what they owe my mother. No one from their family came to my mother's funeral because of their worthless pride!"

Her voice sounds agitated. This is the first time An felt emotion from her.

"I need a large house for many things. There's a basement which I do my experiments."

"So... what's this supernatural ability you mentioned?"

An can't hold his question any longer. He has been collecting all supernatural legends and rumors around China and studied them. Yet most of these are just superstitions.

"Just like you..." An turns around and points at him. "You are born with

supernatural abilities. Your sister is the same. You can sense the existence of ghosts. The premonitions are a form of this."

"Don't you have a premonition ability too? Why did you say you are not born with it?"

"I am not the same as you two. Even though we all awakened our abilities after encountering ghosts, my ability is a side effect of my father's ability. I didn't inherit it. Otherwise, my ability won't be so limited."

She looks sad that she didn't inherit her father's ability.

"How are we going to begin the investigation?"

XiaPeng and XueYan came to Jin's house by afternoon and brought the related documents. One is a cop and the other a reporter so they have their sources.

Xie Xiaohao is a regular high school student. Nice person, good grades. However, there just isn't any intersecting points between him and Zhang Jun. They even lived two districts apart.

"Why... them?" XueYan is confused then a possibility comes to mind. "Wait... are you sure it's the same person that killed Xie Xiaohao and Zhang Jun?"

"Yes. I am certain. The reason is simple. I sensed the same keyword at the time of their deaths."

"Keyword?" XiaPeng recalls that she mentioned a premonition ability. "What... is that keyword?"

"Twisted. I sensed this word when they died. Officer Xia should have a deep image of this word."

XiaPeng recalls the body he saw and immediately feel disgusted. He nods quietly.

Though XueYan is confused.

"That corpse... it was abnormal." He doesn't know how to describe that terrifying corpse.

Li is in Zhang Jun's house questioning his parents. His parents are going insane from his disappearance. And accepted her interview since she was the last one that talked to him.

Zhang Jun's house is fairly plain. They are not financially well off. His parents' eyes are all swollen.

"Miss Yi... I don't understand what does the death of that high schooler

has to do with my son."

The old couple are at a loss because Li didn't ask about their son but rather the death of another person.

"The fact is, he mentioned this name during our last conversation."

Li lied. Jin taught her to say this because normal people wouldn't believe in premonitions.

The lie is effective. The couple don't have any doubt and the mother says. "How can it be? What did he say? I don't remember he knows any high schooler."

"He said 'Xie Xiaohao is dead. I... misfortune is coming for me.'"

"How can this be? I... don't know. Dad, do you know anything?"

"I don't know either. Miss Yi, are you sure?"

Li rubs her hands out of guilt and her voice lowers. "Probably not."

No valuable information here. But XiaPeng is going to die tomorrow if we don't do something...

"Jun, where are you..." The mother begins weeping.

Li sighs. She would have the same warmth from family if her parents didn't die seven years ago.

"Li, why are you running so fast? We only went away for a few days."

Li is hopping to the door with excitement. "An, you are too slow! I want to eat the honey cake mom bakes."

They already came to the door. Li takes out the keys to open the door then runs inside. An quickly follows and closed the door. "This crazy girl even forgets to close the door."

"Dad! Mom!" Li runs to the bedroom to look for her parents. He also misses them but he hears a heartbreaking scream before he reaches the bedroom.

An's heart clenches tight and rushes into the room. Then he covers his mouth with his hand and backs off.

"No, don't look! Li, close your eyes!"

Li only remembers darkness fell when An covered her eyes. But that horrifying scene in front of her. Why...?

The smell of blood keeps reminding her this isn't a dream.

The cops came and are also shocked by the scene. This couple's bodies are cut into three sections. On the floor is a claw mark that aligns with the cuts! They analysed the claw mark but can't identify what animal it belongs to.

The two high schoolers are taken into their aunt's custody. This case became a point of discussion in the city. Reporters often come to harass them. That scene has been carved into Li's heart. She's more terrified than sad at this point.

One day, An wakes her up.

"What's it?"

"Come with me. Leave this city."

She rubs her eyes and looks at the clock. It's only 1AM. Their aunt and uncle are still sleeping.

"An... what are you talking about? Why leave?"

An's expression looks serious. "We have to leave. For ourselves and to not get aunt and uncle involved. We are cutting off all contacts with friends and relatives starting today."

Li gets dressed in confusion and follows An out the house. They get on a taxi to the train station.

"Li, do you believe in ghosts?"

"An... don't scare me."

"I'm sorry." Tears begin filling his eyes. His voice is choking with sobs. "I should have thought about getting revenge instead... but I can't do it. If we didn't live in school that week, maybe we are also dead... Mom and dad left a diary that mentioned the reason for the death. They wrote to us, 'run!' That's why I have to leave with you..."

"An, why didn't you hand something so important to the police? And where are we going?"

"I don't know. Let's leave first. We have enough money to find a place. Don't go back to your school. Don't get in contact with your friends. We need to disappear from the world and so as to not let that 'thing' find out anything about us."

Li shivers. What is that 'thing'?

"Listen. This is the diary. Take a look and you will understand..."

Li reads the diary under the dim light inside the taxi.

"An, Li... Perhaps we are dead by the time you are reading this. Listen carefully. If we died, then run away from this city after reading the diary. Don't let anyone learn of your location. Anyone! Including relatives and

your best friends. This may be the only way to be saved. I don't know if that 'thing' ever done anything to you but just to be sure... There's a red box inside the fourth drawer of my desk. Inside it is a bank draft at An's name. The money is enough to sustain you. You can consider working part time while going to school. But it doesn't matter if you don't go to college. The most important thing is stay alive. Don't stay in this city any longer!

About three days ago, a strange noise woke us up in the night. But that noise quickly disappeared. We thought that was a dream and didn't pay much attention to it but... the next morning, we found a claw mark of three swipes on the wall. That mark tore the wallpaper and the concrete wall behind. We hired people to check it but found no cause.

Was it some animal that sneaked into our house? We didn't call the police because nothing was lost in the house. However... the day after... we found the claw mark moved! The clawed wall from before suddenly recovered but that mark... moved closer to our bedroom! That's when we realized that 'it' was approaching us!"

Chapter 7

Li almost screamed when she reads this. The taxi driver glances behind.

"No... that can't be..."

She can never forget the claw marks that killed her parents. She thought those marks were from beasts or a maniac... but how can it be?

"Perhaps you won't believe this. We also thought it was unreal. But the claw mark moved was undeniable. It was at least ten meters away from the bedroom's door but only five meters the next day! Yet, despite the terror we felt, we didn't connect it with ghosts. We moved to An's room to be safe. Fortunately, you weren't here at the time to experience the ordeal."

"But moving was no use. The claw mark appeared right outside An's room today! And the one that was near our bedroom is gone. By this time, we have no choice but to accept this mark doesn't belong to our world. It can chase us no matter where we run!"

Li's tears soaked the diary. She says to An. "Why? Dad and mom are good people... we had never done anything bad. Why did this disaster land on us? Why do we have to run? Why..."

"We must run. This is our only choice. Dad and mom realized they couldn't avoid the claw mark and accepted their deaths. The diary wrote they tried staying in a hotel but the mark followed."

On the last page of the diary, it wrote. "We decided to make one last effort to end this problem before you come back. We also considered asking for help but we didn't want to drag other people into this disaster. Tonight, we will wait outside our bedroom for the owner of the claw mark."

"Listen, you will come back tomorrow. If we died.. then run!"

In the end, they both died.

Yet, they were supposed to wait outside the bedroom but died inside. There was also no blood anywhere outside.

This isn't something imaginable by humans. The police won't believe it even if they were to hand over the diary. They won't protect them.

"Li, give me your cellphone."

"Why?"

"Give it to me first."

Li hands over her cellphone to An. An also takes his out. The taxi is crossing a bridge at this time and he throws both phones into the river.

"No... An! What are you doing? My friends' numbers are all in the phone..."

"This is my intention, Li. We are saying goodbye to our old lives, both friends and relatives. We have to survive. And we have to abandon everything to do so. Li, I don't want to lose you. I will take care of you from now on."

An kept his promise. They came to a new city, a new school, but they never stayed long in any one city. One or two years later, strange murders or disappearances would get reported in the news and they would move to another city.

They finally settled down in this city because An was tired. He knew supernatural occurrences happen everywhere in the world. Li also didn't want to move after becoming a reporter. An's horror fictions were getting more popular. He regretted not using a pen name because his relatives might come looking for him.

However, Li was happy about it because their relatives would know they are living well. She hoped to return to their original city one day.

"Ms. Yi, Ms. Yi. Are you alright?"

Zhang Jun's mother interrupts her thoughts. "I'm sorry. My mind wandered away. What was I saying?"

XiaPeng and XueYan moved to a hotel for the night. They didn't want to return to that apartment after the event. An never told them XiaPeng is going to die the next day.

"What do you say we should do?"

It's 11:30PM. But they aren't feeling sleepy.

"Are we... going to die?"

XueYan is feeling regrets for getting involved with such a terrifying thing just for more bonus from the job. She can only use 'thing' to describe it.

"I am thinking... I have covered the bathroom mirror with a piece of cloth. We are going to take the stairs going up and down. We will each sleep in 3 hour rotations. Don't worry, this room is close to the fire escape and it's only third floor. I parked my car right below. If something happens, we can run immediately. Don't take off your jackets when you sleep. We will meet with Mr. Yi tomorrow. Go to sleep, I will guard the night."

"XiaPeng... It's my fault."

"It's not your fault. I am also responsible. Just sleep. I will wake you if anything happens."

After comforting XueYan to lie down, he walks over to the window and lights a cigarette. Then he looks at his watch. Almost 12AM.

Just then, XueYan's phone rings from the bathroom.

"Ah. I left my phone in the bathroom." She quickly gets up to enter the bathroom. XiaPeng gets worried since the last incident and wants to follow her. Then he hears XueYan said. "Why? We can't come to hotels?"

It's Jin on the other side.

"You think you are safe staying in a hotel? Don't kid me. Tell me the address and room number. I am coming right over!"

XiaPeng sighs. He takes another smoke and walks back to the window.

What are we going to do from now on?

An arm wraps around his neck. XiaPeng says. "Don't worry. We will live. We will..."

Yet. XueYan's voice comes from the bathroom at the same time. "I dropped the car key into a crack. Can you come in and help me?"

A chill rise from his feet up to his head. That's when he noticed the arm around his neck feels cold.

A scream breaks the silence of the night. The clock hanging on the wall ticks into exactly 12AM.

XueYan rushes out of the bathroom upon hearing the scream but... the room is empty. A still smoking cigarette lies on the ground proving that XiaPeng was here a moment ago.

"Ah--- Help!"

Her first reaction is to run. Then she remembers Jin's words from the call just now. "Remember. Don't leave the room no matter what happens. Experience tells me that you are much more likely to die if you run immediately after getting attacked by ghosts."

In the movies, how many actually lived from running? XueYan calms herself with much difficult and jumps onto the bed. She wraps the yellow blankets around her despite already fully dressed. Then she prays that Jin will come faster.

At the same time, Jin and An are driving toward the hotel.

"There's a question on my mind."

An is sitting on the passenger's seat and asks. "A major difference between Zhang Jun and Xie Xiaohao's deaths are... their bodies. You understand? Xie Xiaohao's body is horrendous but Zhang Jun completely disappeared from the toilet. Isn't that strange? You said the same 'thing' kill the two of them."

"Yes. I said it."

"If what you said is true, then why didn't it leave Zhang Jun's body behind? Don't be mistaken, I am not doubting you. I just want to talk about my speculations."

"Oh?"

"First, I need evidence for my speculation. Li said you showed her photos of Xie Xiaohao's body. Can you also let me take a look?"

"She didn't describe it to you? Understandable by that scene... Ok, I can show you the photos but lets get them from the hotel first."

"Another question."

"You have so many questions."

An bites his lips. "Ms. Ren. Was that you the one who called the hotline and asked weird questions?"

"Right. That was me."

An's surprised she admitted without hesitation. The hotel is in front of them. Jin was driving too fast that even traffic cops couldn't catch them.

They come to the room and knock. "It's me. Open the door! Ms. Ou!"

Before long, XueYan opens the door. She holds onto Jin and begins crying. "XiaPeng... he's gone... help me. I am scared."

An notices Jin enters the room and looks around. Her expression changes. "Let's go. We are leaving this place now."

An recalls that Jin also looked around the toilet Zhang Jun died in. Is this... really what he is thinking?

What did she see that he couldn't?

He thinks Jin didn't tell him everything about supernatural abilities. Why did she not inherit the supernatural ability from her father? However, everything she said should be true since they are easily investigated. Why is she keeping a part as secrets? Can she not trust them? Or is she using them as tools?

Is Jin their savior or another devil?

The biggest question he has is about Jin's father. If he was all knowing and knew of his daughter's fate, why did he disappear and had Jin come look for An and Li? If he didn't care about his daughter, why did he leave the notebook behind?

Back in the car. XueYan sits on the backseat. Jin hands An an envelope. "This is what you want to see."

An nods and takes out a stack of photos.

"How... How can this be..."

Chapter 8

No wonder Xie Xiaohao's parents went insane.

The photos are high definition. A twisted person spread inside the living room.

This person is Xie Xiaohao without a doubt. His limbs and neck are elongated and tied a knot around the furnitures.

His arms are elongated by about four meters and twisted. The left arm wraps around a plant. The right wraps around a light fixture on the wall. His legs are five meters long and drags across the floor. His neck is two meters long and wraps around the ceiling fan by five laps. His head is twisted like a churro, you can't even make out the face.

The following photos were taken from different angles. No wonder the police withheld the cause of death and transported the body with a truck... This wasn't something done by a human. A human body can't be elongated without breaking any parts. There was no blood on the scene, not even a trace of fighting. The neighbors said there were no screams either. How can anyone not scream when he was experiencing this?

An pulls out the forensic report from the envelope. The victim's skeletal structure and muscle structures are also elongated. All the organs are perfectly fine as if he was born with such body. Even his clothes are elongated.

Then... his speculation is right.

An put the photos back and says. "Just burn these. The aftermath is unimaginable if these photos get out to the public." His throat feels dry.

What is... that thing they are facing? Just like the claw mark that killed his parents. They don't belong in this world.

XueYan is trembling in the backseat. She buries her head low, afraid to look up.

"I was too careless. I should have looked after them the whole time." Jin feels troubled. "It took so long to find you two and formed a complete prophecy... We will just have to wait for the fourth victim..."

She glances her eyes back. An knows clearly that XueYan might be the fourth.

"Is she going to be alright for now?"

"Hm... What is the shortest time that your sister can have a premonition?"

"Usually more than 24 hours. But she never got a precise time. Same for me. I won't sense anything that's less than 24 hours. Which means you are currently safe."

"I... am safe?" XueYan feels a bit relieved. "Are your premonitions really

true? Like XiaPeng..."

"To be honest, my sister sensed that he will die today. Isn't it past 12AM already? That falls within the time of death. Every minute can be possible. Ms. Ou. You have to be prepared because you might be the fourth victim. If you want to survive, listen to Ms. Ren as much as possible. She knows more than me. As for the premonitions, every single one had been fulfilled in the past seven years."

XueYan doesn't have any doubts anymore. She believes in the existence of ghosts and these two people are the only ones she can rely on. She views them as people similar to taoist but little does she know that they are merely mortals.

Jin drives back to her house. She plans to keep XueYan in her house for now until the premonitions for the fourth occurs. XueYan is very tired by this time. Once she enters a place where she believes is safe, she quickly falls asleep.

"The good thing about a big house is you can put another person without issues."

Jin closes the bedroom door for XueYan then returns to the living room. An is leaning against a wall and thinking deeping. "What are you thinking? Let me guess... You are suspicious of me and my father's words, and about fate. Correct?"

An sits down on a sofa. "You seem like the daughter of a rich family. But don't you have any maids?"

Jin sits down across from him. Her eyes look a little depressed. "Just me. I don't even talk with my neighbors much. Everyone thinks I am weird. My family doesn't care much about me, so I am on my own."

"What about financially? Does your family provide for your living?"

"I don't need those. I paint illustrations for novels and encyclopedias. Simple job but I don't have any interest in finance and investment. I may look well off but life is difficult. The only asset I have is this house. Though I am not interested in luxuries."

An didn't expect her to talk so much so he doesn't know how to respond.

"Back to our topic. You said you don't want to get your sister involved."

"Right." An says with determination. "This is the biggest requirement of our cooperation. She is a naive person."

"That's unfortunate. She has natural born abilities that can be as good as yours through training."

"About the supernatural abilities... What does that mean to us aside from the premonitions?"

Jin thinks for a bit. "As far as I know, there are different types of natural borns. Many awaken their abilities at a young age, but you are rather late. The abilities awaken upon encountering supernatural occurrences and things. People with stronger abilities can see things that are not visible to

the human eyes."

"Not visible to the human eyes?"

"Yes. We have too little information on ghosts. Ghosts is a traditional term. Normally it is said that souls of people who die become ghosts but legends are not necessarily facts. Not all ghosts come from humans. The majority arose from an unknown world. We shouldn't call them ghosts anymore. Some exist like a curse that has no forms. Once your ability get even stronger, you can sense these curses. However, if you want to fight them, you need to learn. You are far from that stage yet."

Curse? Unknowns?

How am I going to defeat them when I don't even know their forms or patterns? Everything is unknown. How am I going to find the path to live? An feels lost.

"About Xie Xiaohao... It's obvious that thing's ability can turn his body into that form. Then where are Zhang Jun and XiaPeng's bodies?"

Jin nods. "I have the same thoughts. I think their bodies didn't disappear but we just haven't found them. It seems like 'it' has no specific targets. The first two victims have no common points. Or we just don't know of their connection. The fourth victim might be someone who has nothing to do with the prior victims."

The urgent issue is how are they going to protect XueYan if she's the fourth?

"My father emphasized the only way to break the curse is make the premonitions false. Our premonitions are person, time, and keyword respectively. The two that can be changed are time and the person's death. So you have to keep your watch on from this day on. Keep your watch accurate to the minute at any time."

An asks a question that has been lingering within. "What if we kill that person before the prophesied time. Will that count as the premonition failing to happen?"

A dead silence fills the living room. They both have their thoughts.

"I don't know. Maybe. My father didn't write anything about it. However, are you willing to murder for a possibility?"

An doesn't know how to respond. He can't. He isn't the kind of selfish and cruel person. Furthermore, this isn't his only option, nor is it reliable. He can't do it at this point.

However, he can't promise that he won't die anything for Li when this becomes his only option one day.

"Don't think too deeply about this. Fate isn't so easily changed even if you plan to murder. Your sister also won't agree with you. The following problem is a person's death. If we let that person live, our curses are lifted. Well, at least we pass the time in premonition. With your ability now, we can only defend."

"Let XueYan run like we did?" An feels uncomfortable at the suggestion. Is this the only option? Just running? Aren't there methods to fight ghosts in the novels? Charms, pendants, and a dog's blood?

"I have to remind you." Jin seems to know what he's thinking. "The methods they use to fight ghosts in the movies are all fake. Fictions need the good sides to win and invented these methods. In reality, we don't even understand their existence, not to mention finding a way to fight them."

"We should rest ourselves until we receive confirmation of the time. Then we need to stay beside the fourth for 24 hours during the prophesized day. If the victim isn't XueYan, we can consider capturing him. I didn't think of all the possibilities before since it was my first time dealing with this."

"What's next? What are we going to do if that 'thing' comes out?"

"This is the map of the city." She pulls out a map and points at a few marked places. "See this? I planned a few routes of escape. If we have to capture him, then we can consider this mansion. I asked for a mansion with easy access to transportation. There are subway and bridges nearby and many intersections to avoid traffic. The streets are populated since this is a good area. If the fourth victim is XueYan, I have chosen a place."

She circles a point with a red pen. "This is the memorial park in the city center. Many police staying there to maintain order due to the coming holidays. The place is pretty crowded also. We can choose to stay beside the mayor's statue, which isn't far from the parking lot. The memorial park is open to the public 24 hours a day so we can stay overnight. Once we exit the park, there are three streets we can go, all in opposite direction

of Xie Xiaohao's apartment."

"Such detailed plan." An applauds her for studying the terrain and considered every possibility. He can see on the map that their routes won't go near anywhere with little people. They can also ask for help if they stay near the statue. People nowadays are apathetic but the police have to help. The more people they can drag into the mess, the bigger their chance is.

Of course, nothing is perfect, especially when their opponent is not a human. No one knows what will happen. There's also a risk that if they fail and the body appears next to them, they might catch the police's attention, and might even be framed as murderers.

Just then, An senses an image in his head and a name.

Chapter 9

Good. The fourth person is XueYan.

"Then... we will follow our second plan. Now we have to wait for your sister." Jin looks at XueYan's room and says. "You can go back. Call me when you get the message. I will tell her the date. Remember, we are not saving her life but ours. If she lives, our curses will be broken. So don't try it as other people's problem."

An sighs at this woman's adamance. Not everyone can stay calm when burdened with such a fate. Perhaps her heart is fragile inside.

An had thought about searching for ways to break the curse or even find those who has the same fate. But his parents death shadowed his heart. He always felt that his remaining life was stolen from death and didn't dare to provoke anything.

Knowing he will be killed, yet without the specific time or how he will die is much more terrifying than death itself.

"I understand. I will contact you." His only choice is to trust her.

After An left, Jin stayed in the living room.

The time is 1:30am. She should be sleepy by now, yet she can't fall asleep.

If I kill the victim before the date...

She considered this. But she didn't have the name before and couldn't bring it to action. It's different this time.

She stands up seemingly involuntarily and walks to the kitchen. Those words are like demons within, guiding her toward the knives. She pulls out a sharp knife. XueYan's room is only twenty meters to her back. The plan will be so simple and easy.

Guilt? XueYan is going to die soon anyway. Why not give a chance for others to live?

"No!" She puts the knife down and crouched on the floor. She shakes her head to shake the thoughts away.

Why... didn't I inherit the ability from my father? Why... didn't I inherit those eyes?

Her grandparents passed away early. Many people that knew her father also lived short lives. Everyone her father loved ended in terrible fates.

She was curious as a child. Why did father had a pair of eyes different from other people? Why was he called the child of unfortunate? No one from the in-laws family ever visited her. No neighbors wanted anything to do with her family. No one understood him except her mother.

Grandpa didn't like father the moment he was born because of the pair of violet eyes. People near him died one after another in strange deaths since he was a child.

The first was grandpa. He died in a concealed room. No wounds. The cause was heart attack but he had always been healthy. Father was five at the time.

Then grandma hung herself. The strange thing was there was nothing under her to step on. It was supposed to be considered a murder but... she died in a concealed room.

Then his uncles, aunts, friends. Almost ten people died in several years. The rumors spread and some even suspected father killed these people. The more religious believed he brought misfortune.

Father's supernatural abilities began showing up at the time. Though he still didn't understand them. He also feared about the deaths surrounding him. He knew he was innocent but no one trusted him. Humans are always retarded when presented with what they don't know. Why was he treated like a murderer?

The misfortune didn't stop. Eventually, no one wanted to be his friend. No one wanted to talk to him. Everyone avoided his eyes. It was rumored those that met him in the eyes were not going to live long.

Until mother appeared.

Father had obtained his master's degree in psychology at the time and

headed to study overseas. People there didn't know his past so he had a period of normal life.

Mother was his patient, the daughter of a rich family. The rich life felt empty and lonely to her. Father was invited to treat her depression. The young doctor, learned and well informed, and those unique eyes quickly attracted her.

However, father hesitated on returning the love. Because he knew he would bring misfortune to those he loved. He also fell in love. Mother was young, beautiful, smart and born from a rich family. He didn't want her to meet tragedy because of him.

Yet, how could young people contain their loves? Reasoning was out of their minds. When mother bore me and begged grandfather to hold their wedding, grandfather was angry. The rich wouldn't accept this marriage. He easily found about father's past. No one in the family supported the couple.

Just like overused drama, mother decided to abandon everything for love. What she didn't know was this path had no turning back. Life after marriage was rough but she stayed by father's side.

"I wish Jin's eyes are like yours... I like your eyes." She never thought of those eyes as misfortune. But father was happy that their daughter wasn't born as a child of misfortune.

Jin knew she didn't inherit her father's ability. She felt fortunate when she was a child. But after mother's death, she hated this.

Father's ability wasn't fully awoken by the time but he could sense the danger looming on mother. He wrote this in his notebook.

Then she encountered the misfortune.

Father couldn't help but blame himself. If they didn't meet... but who could foretell everything?

He desired to know the future and that activated his premonitions. He learned his daughter was going to die. In order to not bring the same fate to her, he left. Will he kill to save her daughter?

Should I do it? Should I kill XueYan?

At the same time, XueYan suddenly wakes up.

What's happening? Where am I?

It's a complete darkness. Then she remembers she is in Jin's house. The fear slowly dissipates. But she suddenly feels something is not right.

Why isn't there light in the room? I left the light on when I went to bed!

She quickly flipped the switch on the nightstand. Nothing wrong. She wipes the sweat off her forehead and grips onto blanket.

What time is it? Should I head to work today? Boss is going to be mad

for another day off without reason... No. Life is the most important thing at the moment. I can go look for another job.

She looks around to confirm nothing wrong before lying back down.

As her head touches the pillow, she jumps up. She turns her face slowly to the left.

No... it came be...

The box that was in her house was now in the corner of the room!

That box disappeared when she fainted, yet it's here now.

Her legs feel numb. She pulls herself back and get off the bed. When she is prepared to run, the box disappear.

Illusion?

Can't be this simple...

Jin picks up the knife and puts it back.

Mother wouldn't wish her to do this.

Take a rest first... and consider everything after I wake up.

"Oh? The fourth person is Ms. Ou?"

"Yes. Unfortunately, our premonitions don't come at the same time."

During breakfast, An told Li everything. She gets excited and says.
"How about I take a day off and join you guys?"

An's face looked terrible so she sighs. "You just finished a new book so your publisher is giving you a long break..."

"Start eating. Don't you have work today?"

Before leaving the house, Li says. "An, don't worry. I will help you investigate. Make sure to protect Ms. Ou. I will call you when I get the premonition."

As he's about to return to his room, the door opens and Li runs back in. An asks. "What's wrong? Forgot something?"

"An... I sensed it... Ms. Ou's death is.... three days later!"

An hour later, An arrives at Jin's house. XueYan's face instantly turns white when she learns of her date.

"I... don't want to die... I really don't want to die..."

Jin opens the map in front of her and says. "Ms. Ou. I know you don't want to die. So you must follow our orders. We have confirmed you are cursed so we have to come up with a way to help you live through the day in these three days. Remember, once midnight passes, you are safe. So you have to work with us!"

XueYan sits down and listens to the plan. Disappointment grows within her. These two are merely normal people. She thought they would bring out magical items or swords.

But it is still better than taking it on her own.

"Am I going to be completely safe during these three days?"

Jin thinks for a bit. "If by safe you mean if you can stay alive, then you don't have to worry. You won't die in these three days. However, I can't promise terrifying things won't happen."

Like the box from last night? Goosebumps grows all over her body.

"You can return home during these three days. My house won't be more safe. You can go to work so you don't have to keep thinking."

She shakes her head.

"Ms. Ren... I think I am better off staying here..."

The box is probably going to follow me if I return home. Hotels are not safe too.

"I don't mind. But Ms. Ou, it will be the same no matter where you stay. The key day is three days later. If you are scared, we can sleep together. You can wake me up if you feel danger."

She immediately nods and cries. "Thank you so much... Ms. Ren... Thank you for the help."

Jin feels terrible for thinking of killing her. She's just trying to save herself by saving XueYan.

"Don't thank me. I can't promise anything... I'm really sorry."

Chapter 10

An is in the toilet that Zhang Jun disappeared.

He wants to confirm something before the three days are up.

What did Jin see that he couldn't?

She said she doesn't have the ability to see supernatural beings.

But there's something on his mind.

The reason he can gather the courage to come here is because he had been paying attention to the news from the previous city they lived in. There are several public figures that are supposed to die before Li and him, but they are still alive. He might not even be able to kill himself before the day comes. So he doesn't have to worry about encountering that thing like XueYan did.

The police eliminated the possibility of the murder taking place in this toilet.

No one is here at this time. The loneliness is unsettling. Everything remained the same as that day, including the doors that are open and shut. An walks lightly to not make any sound.

Suddenly, a flushing sound come from one of the shut toilets. It startled him for a moment. But he quickly calms down and keeps on looking.

However, a minute passes and he feels something's not right. Why isn't that person coming out?

An crouches down and peeks through the bottom.

Inside is a pair of feet! Feet that looks white without any blood.

An quickly stands up. He clenches his teeth and kicks the door open. No one is inside.

He feels a chill from his back and backs off. Then he steps on something. It's a coiled up rubber tube. He lets out a sigh of relief.

But something feels off. He remembers seeing this tube from that day.

There are two strange points.

One, this tube seems too long. It's at least coiled up hundreds of rounds. Does a toilet need one that long?

Second is the tubes color!

To confirm his speculation, he picks it up and pinches it.

How can it be...

Why did Xie Xiaohao left his corpse in the room? Why did Zhang Jun and Xia Peng's bodies disappeared? And the keyword...

Twisted...

He pulls up the tube and lays it straight on the ground.

What he sees is a gruesome scene.

This isn't rubber... he could feel it when he pinched it.

At the same time, Jin comes to the hotel room XiaPeng and XueYan stayed in. She has the staff opens the door and quickly walks in.

This isn't a tube...

It's Zhang Jun's body!

He can feel the same touch as human skin when he pinched it.

Zhang Jun's body was elongated just like Xie Xiaohao's body. It was coiled up and placed inside the toilet. His face, neck, arms, and legs are all twisted around the body. The face is elongated to six meters that he can't even make it out. All that's left is the barely distinguishable eyeballs and wide open mouth...

"Monster!"

Fear and rage rise within him. It's like the scene of his parents death appeared again... He kneels down and bangs on the floor.

Am I... going to die the same terrifying death in the future? Or perhaps even more terrible? And Li? I will change this fate at all cost!

I can't let XueYan die!

Jin stands by the bed and sighs. She picks up a pale yellow blanket and flips it over.

Just as she had thought.

This is XiaPeng!

His body was elongated to a square. His head over half a meter wide and his arms and legs are twisted together with the body...

Twisted... what a perfectly suitable keyword.

The horrifying fact is XueYan slept covering with this blanket until she came!

She holds onto the disgusted feeling and puts her duffle bag on the floor. As she's about to put the blanket in to avoid being discovered so XueYan won't be taken to the police and interrupt their plan, she hears a scream from behind. She turns around to see... XueYan!

"What is that thing? Is that... XiaPeng?"

The fear overwhelms her and she runs away screaming.

"Hey, XueYan. Hey!" Jin chases after her but she already entered the elevator.

An feels down after coming out of the toilet. He buried Zhang Jun's body nearby. Hope no one finds the body. How many more people are going to die? Is everyone going to become like this?

His phone rings and it's Li.

"Hello? Li. Anything you need?"

"An? I sensed that Ms. Ou is going to die tomorrow!"

An asks. "Didn't you say three days this morning? Why is it tomorrow now?"

"This morning? When did I say anything about three days?"

"Didn't you... return after leaving? Then you told me..."

His hands are shaking.

"No... I didn't come back..."

"Where are you? I am coming over right now!"

An hour later, he arrives at the news agency. It's just lunch time so Li is waiting by the entrance. An runs over panting and grabs her hand. "Li, tell me... No. I have to confirm if you are the real Li. What is the name of your favorite doll when you were a child?"

"Hm? Why do you suddenly ask? Harley."

"Right. You are Li."

Then the Li the returned in the morning... Who? Or what is it?

XueYan ran out of the hotel then runs on the street without direction. God! What was that? And why did Jin put that in a bag? Is she... a ghost too?

She can't trust anyone anymore. After running for a kilometer, she stops to catch her breath and looks behind to see if anyone is chasing after.

"What? XueYan's true death is tomorrow?"

Jin is shocked to receive the call from An. How can this be?

She is taking this call in the hotel's parking lot. The bag with the corpse is placed on the hood of her car to her back.

"I called her phone but she hung up immediately. I think she is mistaken. I have to find her or she will still think her death is in three days. We have to find her before midnight today!"

Just then...

An arm reaches out from the bag and grabs onto her right hand. She screams instantly. The arm shrinks back. She immediately opens the bag to find it empty inside.

"Asshole... What do you want! What do you freaking want!"

Jin throws the bag on the ground and opens the car door. She decides

to head to XueYan's workplace, even though the chances are slim.

Must find her before midnight!

She steps into the office to find An already here. As expected, no one knows where XueYan is. Jin leaves her number behind and stresses XueYan is in danger.

XueYan's parents aren't living in this city. Who would she go for?

"Do you think she will leave the city to find her parents?"

"It's possible... but this will be bad."

An and Jin decides to split up.

She's probably not going back to her house. Where might she be?

An is driving around the city. He looks at his watch frequently and tries to call her number. She turned off her phone. An throws his phone to the side and steps on the gas pedal harder. He doesn't want to see another corpse like that again!

Jin is driving to the nearest train station.

Five hours passed. The sky is turning dark and XueYan is still nowhere to be seen.

The time is looming in. What should we do?

XueYan walks into a twenty four hour restaurant. She doesn't know what to do so just stay here first. A place with people is more comforting. Fortunately, she brought enough cash and a credit card.

After ordering the dishes, she notices the hunger and begins eating. One of the dishes is pasta but the taste feels off.. What's wrong with it?

It tastes different from usual...

She wants to call the waiter but life is on the life already, taste doesn't matter at this point as long as it's edible. However, a few minutes passes and it just tastes horrible. She spits them back to the plate.

"How did they even make this pasta?"

As she looks at the pasta, her head gets dizzy and she has to close her eyes.

When she opens her eyes again, what she sees on the plate isn't pasta but... a human body! She can see XiaPeng's eyes on the end of the fork. His eyes staring at her..

"Ghost!"

She throws the plate on the ground. The people around give her weird looks as she screamed. "Help! Someone save me... those pasta..."

XueYan forgets to pay the bill and runs to the exit. The waiter comes to stop her but she pushes him away. Outside the restaurant, the night has fallen.

Why is it suddenly so dark?

She looks at her watch and freezes. She remembers clearly that it was only 5:30pm when she ordered the food and she only ate for about ten minutes... but it's 11:59pm now!

How? Did six hours passed when I closed my eyes and open them again?

Only one more minute until midnight!

Chapter 11

She still comforts herself. "Not... not an issue. Even if I die, I will die three days later. Nothing will happen to me now."

But she can't help and start running. Pedestrians are getting fewer the more streets she runs pass. Until she can't even see one person on the street anymore. Even though there aren't suppose to be that many people out at this time of the day but why are all the building lights out? She raises her head and it is a complete darkness. Not even moonlight.

Where... is this...

The second hand has ticked half a circle. The time until midnight is getting closer and closer.

Without even realizing it...

She finds herself unable to see anything around her! Not even her own hand. How is this possible in a modern city?

Just then, the sound of heavy breathing comes from behind. She jumps in shock then heard footsteps approaching.

"Who? Who's there?"

She raises her voice to give herself more courage. The footstep didn't slow down. The time has past midnight.

"Don't... don't chase. Please don't!"

She begins to run in desperation even though her legs are already exhausted. She knows that she's dead if it chases up to her. There is still no light anywhere. The footsteps also turned from walking to running. The sound of every step feels like a stomp to her heart.

Suddenly, she trips over something hard.

XueYan hits her head on the ground and she sprained her leg. She uses that thing as support to get up. It feels empty inside. Light suddenly comes on.

And she sees what the thing is.

It is... that box! The box is opened!

An arm reaches out from the box and grabs her hand. Then it pulls her inside the box.

The cover closes.

"XueYan may be dead."

An and Jin are feeling tired and sleepy by now. They hadn't eaten anything since the search. The two of them gathered at XueYan's workplace again.

"I headed to her apartment at midnight." Jin pants heavily. "Then I went home and slept for four hours before going out to search again. Her phone is still turned off. She might not be alive anymore."

An's eyes also have dark circles around and he yawns frequently. "Let's go check her office again..."

They ask XueYan's coworkers in the office. The replies are the same. Her desk is still empty.

"Our boss is getting angry. Said he's going to fire her if she doesn't show up today. What happened to her? Mafias? We should just call the police. Isn't her boyfriend a cop too?"

Just then, the phone to XueYan's desk rings. Jin picks it up at once. "Hello? Who are you looking for?"

"Is this Ms. Ou of the monthly magazines?" Sounds like a middle aged man.

Jin replies. "I am not but this is the magazine's office. You are?"

"Please hurry and get Ms. Ou on the phone!"

"I am sorry. She isn't here. I can relay your message to her."

"Well... I am the landlord of the Fucon apartments... You know the one with the murder case? She came over a few days ago with a cop to see the apartment with the murder. I gave the keys to them because of the cop but they didn't return the keys when they left! I went to the police station afterward but that cop disappeared. I got this number from the cops. You have to return the keys to me."

So this is why. They attracted it by entering the apartment.

Jin is about to hand the phone over to the workers when she hears a woman shouts. "What are you doing on the phone? Come and help me! The waste pipes are clogged. Go call the managements. Look at the pool of water on the floor!"

"What are you shouting for! It's been like this since the morning... Ah, I am not talking to you miss. Please tell Ms. Ou to return the keys as soon as possible."

The call hangs up.

"Who was that?" An asks.

"Nothing important."

An feels a hint of unease.

When he first had the premonition of the fourth victim, a surge of unease struck him. As XueYan's image became clear in his mind, he felt something horrifying entered his body. Even though this was just a premonition, the feeling gave him chills throughout.

She wouldn't die as easily as the first three...

"Let's go eat first. You should be hungry. There's a pretty good western cuisine restaurant nearby." An suggests after they left the office.

Jin also feels exhausted and should eat something to fill her energy.

The restaurant is decorated nicely. Wooden tables, a fountain in the center, pebble floor, tree leaves hanging on the ceiling.

An picks up the menu and asks. "What would you like? I will treat this meal. Just got my royalties for the new book. Have you read my new book?"

"Anything. Of course I have read it. Great imagination. No wonder companies from Hong Kong wants to make them into movies. Though it probably won't pass the movie audits in mainland China. Actually, it's a miracle you can even publish the books since they include too much supernaturals."

"How about steak or chicken wings? You're right. Writing is just a mean for a living. I only have a bachelor since I have been moving around so often. It's too difficult to find a job. So I have to rely on writing web novels."

The dishes come and they look at each other.

"Have you ever thought about... the day you are going to die?" Jin asks.

Not a pleasant question but An answers her.

"Yes. Many, many times. Until I got numb about it. Then I decided to not think about it anymore."

He fiddles with the fork and knife to ease himself.

"I never thought about it. Maybe because I trust my father." Her eyes is gleaming when she mentions her father.

"Aside from us, are there anyone else?" An suddenly asks.

"What?"

"I think since your father is all knowing and knows about us, are there any other that have supernatural abilities? Did he tell you in the notebook to find more people?"

Jin smiles. "You certainly are smart."

"He mentioned to find an artist that can see what normal people can't see and paint it down, called Ning Luo. However, this is the only

information about him. There's also a person that has a strong ability to take out ghosts that reside in a person's body. This is the strongest power a human can obtain."

An suddenly stands up. "Ning Luo? I met this person before!"

"What?" Jin also stands up. "When? Where?"

"About a year go. I got into a writer's block and looked for a place for inspiration. The editor recommended me this person and gave me his address. He was an artist with peculiar habits. Not many people know about him."

"And then?"

"The first time I visited him, he was quite strange and wanted to drive me out as soon as he saw me. However, it was like he sensed something and invited me back in. He took me to his painting room and pointed to the pile of paintings. Then asked me. 'Do you see a woman?' I felt it was weird since there was nothing... So he could probably see something beyond me."

"What's the color?"

"Hm?"

"The color of his eyes."

"Oh, they are deep violet."

That's him! Jin feels excited to have found the third person on his father's list so quick.

"Can you take me to him?"

"Of course. He gave me a lot of inspiration after the visit. I can still remember his address. But let's deal with the current issue first."

An suddenly notices it and asks. "Why did you ask me about the color of his eyes?"

"The color of eyes is a display of the person's supernatural level. Those inherited the abilities have violet eyes. But most people have to awaken the abilities with training. People with black eyes like you can train your abilities and they will eventually change color."

The conversation from the next table catches Jin's attention.

"Oh? So what happened?"

"That woman threw a plate of pasta on the floor and screams ghosts. Then she ran away without paying. She even pushed the waiter to the floor. There's definitely something wrong with her head."

"And I was sitting near her table and overheard the waiters talking about her. So I asked one of them. What do you think he said? The waiter

said that woman entered the restaurant at about 5pm. She ate half her plate of pasta then just sat there like a fossil until way past 11pm. The waiters came up to her multiple times but she had no response. If she wasn't still breathing, they would have thought she was dead. When the time was almost midnight, she woke up and screamed ghost. She's more like a ghost."

Jin puts down the fork and walks over. "Hello, mister. The person you were talking about might be a friend of mine. Where did you see her?"

"Oh, you know her? That was in a 24 hour restaurant at XY road. Not that I am curious but your friend..." He points at his head. "Is there something wrong with her?"

Jin goes back to her seat. "Let's go."

They come to the restaurant. Jin asks a waiter about last night. "Since she didn't pay, did you chase after her?"

"Yes. But we couldn't see her after we ran out of the restaurant. So we told the manager and called the police. Since you know her, can you tell us her identity?"

It was almost midnight at the time... Did so meet the same fate as XiaPeng and got killed at midnight? But the streets around here are crowded commercial streets. If she became a twisted corpse, people should have found her..

Her corpse... twisted. Where can she be?

A thought suddenly comes to her mind.

Can it be...

She says to An at once. "Come with me! I know where her body might be!"

An asks in the car. "Where are we going?"

"To the Fucon apartments."

The floor of the Fucon apartment has accumulated half a meter high of water and garbage. The residents are draining the water with buckets.

"Why isn't the management here already when the pipes are clogged up like this!"

"How can they be so irresponsible! What's clogging the pipes?"

The unease is building up on Jin.

An's heart is beating increasingly fast as he kind of gets her.

"Let's leave. I don't want to hear the answer." Jin buries her head between her knees.

"Ah. I understand..."

As An ignites the engine, they hear a cry from upstairs. "The plumbers just hooked the thing that clogged the pipe out! Do you know what it is? A leg! A human leg!"

The police quickly arrives. Different from the Xie Xiaohao case, too many people know of this one.

XueYan's body is twenty three meters long, stuck into the pipe and twisted. She was stuck in that darkness with wastewater for hours.

The cops also found out that there are signs of scratches inside the pipe near her elongated hands.

Which means that she was still alive when her body turned into that form.

What stuck her into the pipe? How did it do it? This became a mystery.

No more twisted corpses appeared after that case.

